MIRIAM

AND

OTHER POEMS

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J. HUNT STANFORD

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MIRIAM

—AND—

OTHER POEMS

By

J. HUNT STANFORD

" There is a pleasure in poetic pains
Which only poets know."
—Cowper

William Briggs
Publisher
Toronto
1908

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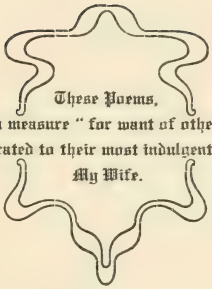
These Poems,
written in a measure "for want of other idleness,"
are dedicated to their most indulgent critic—
My Wife.

FOREWORD

An introduction is scarcely necessary to the poems to be found in the following pages. Most of them have appeared, from time to time, in English and Canadian publications; and while some of them have been kindly received, others have probably passed unread and even unnoticed. What little merit there is in them is no doubt overbalanced by metrical defects, and by Nature's failure to endow me with the "fine frenzy" of the true poet. Such as they are, however, these poems are offered to whoever may be disposed to spare occasional moments in the reading of them, and if I find but a few indulgent and appreciative readers I shall be satisfied.

J. HUNT STANFORD.

Toronto, January, 1908.

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Miriam and Other Poems

MIRIAM: A PICTURE

Miriam, your picture haunts me! From my books
Mine eyes are playing truant; and to eyes
That fascinate turn frequently. Your looks
Are fixed upon me, and the light that lies
Within those orient orbs (more luminous
Than artist's skill portray'd, and yet it seems
Not altogether fancied) glows with beams
Of radiant recognition when I thus
Responding meet your steadfast scrutinies.
I lose myself in fathoming the deeps
That lie half hidden in your wondrous eyes;
And, gazing long, upon my spirit creeps
A subtle spell like that which sometimes steals
On the adoring worshipper who kneels
In incens'd silence at the sculptur'd shrine
Of smiling Alma Mater. Fancy-fed
A life-glow tints your cheeks, and smiles benign
O'erspread your faultless features: lips bloom red
As peonies, and bewitchingly suggest
Luxurious kisses which—like sirens' songs—

Allure but to delude. To you belongs
Such beauty as would peerlessly invest
An houri—such as the immortal Fair
Had look'd upon with rivalry—as might
Have furnish'd Raphaelle with model rare
For masterpiece Madonna. Love's own light
In scintillating splendor all your face
Illuminates; and for a bright brief space
The present seems all time, and you and me
The universe!
But fleeting is the spell:
The fancy passes, and again I see
Mere pictur'd loveliness—tho' still a well
Of inspiration. Eyes that shone so bright
And searchingly—like those of dæmon-love
Down glancing from her native sphere above
This earth-plane—lose their lustre, and their light
Dissolving leaves but cunning counterfeit.
Yet still you charm, and other fancies rise—
Vague dreamings, memories, many a strange conceit
And many a wild imagining. Your eyes
Become as windows out through which I gaze
On other beauty—beauty from the days
When flourish'd chivalry, the exalted Fair
Whose moods sway'd empires, heart-thron'd queens of song
And heroines of history. The air
Fills fast with phantoms; and a shadowy throng
Of Limbo's Fairest fascinous flits by.
I cannot name the thousand shapes that glide
Before me; nor express the love, the pride,
The virtues, graces, charms, divinity
I see exemplified. Yet some there are

Who shine amidst this pageant of the Fair
As shine Canopus and Canicula
Amidst the lesser suns; whose beauty rare,
Whose deeds, whose love, whose nobleness, whose fame
Clings longest to the memory, and who claim
The homage of the ages. Foremost there
I greet fair Helen, and with her the roll
Of Homer's music on the listening air
Reverberates, and in my dream-drown'd soul
Heroic fire enkindles. There I see
The Sestos priestess whom Leander lov'd;
And she who over all temptations prov'd
Victorious—the chaste Penelope.
Then, in a clearer light, the beauteous Queen
Of Egypt—bride of Love and Death; and she
Whose sceptre sway'd Palmyra, and between
This twain that British Queen whose memory
E'er makes the blood run tingling thro' the veins,
Who fought to free her people from the chains
Of Roman slavery. And then I see
Fair Rosamond, Godiva, Antoinette,
Jeanne d'Arc, Elizabeth of Hungary,
The Cenci's daughter, Denmark's Margaret,
And three immortalized by poets' lyre
And passion—Leonora, Beatrice,
And Petrarch's Laura. Thus the artifice
Of Fancy fashions dreams which you inspire,
And thus you move me! . . . . . .
. . . . In the days
Of Faith, 'tis said that certain sculptur'd saints
Were oft endowed with life; and when the gaze
Of kneeling worshippers, shriv'd from the taints
Of sin by good confession, to them turn'd

(While yet the holy fire within them burn'd),
The saintly eyes would light with heavenly beams
And lips would move in benison. It seems
Your picture, Miriam, has a such-like power;
And yet I know it is but painter's skill
That so enriches it. This to your dower
Of loveliness—which thus doth pleasing fill
My idle moments with fair dreams—and this
To Art and Womanhood a tribute is!

THE ALTRUIST

"Religion . . . is this: to visit the fatherless and widows in their tribulation."—James 1. 27.

You love your fellow-man; your heart with gladness
hails his joy,
And with compassion seeks to soothe his misery. You
turn
The eye of pity to the poor; scornest the oppressor;
And the oppress'd ne'er vainly ask your sympathy.
You love
The weakling stronger than the strong; and to the
fatherless
A foster-father's patronage e'er readily bequeath.
And yet they call you Infidel! The churches have you
set
Without the pale; and have a ban (O matchless
mockery!)
Upon you plac'd. With bell and book and candle,
cross and stole,
You excommunicated stand! Yet I would risk my
soul
And all its future heritage in company with yours.

What if the all you do dispute be true, will God condemn
For faulty faith an honest man and clement? Goodness is
As goodness does, and Charity is greatest of the Three!
I wist not all the credos sung or said in Christendom
Did more avail than meanest act of kindness. Faith and Doubt
Are one—both start where Knowledge ends—but Love is all in all!
If Heaven be true, for such as you alone (despite the creeds,
The churches, the anathemas they fling) must heaven exist;
If Karma, then the babe who now within the womb of Time
Awaits your dying, whose first breath is sequel to your last,
Will tread the surer in the path Nirvana terminates:
If neither, and the end of man is but a going home
To Mother Nature—dreamless sleep within her bosom, earth
To earth returning—still you bless for ever and are blest!
There springs from kindliness and love a noble happiness
And subtle peace that fills the Now with softest melody;
And for Hereafter procreates such blessed influence
Which Time, destroyer of most else, can ne'er destroy. Thus blest
And blessing, let your doubts prevail—what odds? The gods that be
Must ever venerate a man who loves his fellow-man!

THE ALL THAT AVAILS

Give me the light and the laughter of Love, and the world may withhold me the rest;
Let me the whole of the strength of my soul in the service Love asketh invest;
Let me drink down to the dregs of Love's draught thro' the best to bitterest taste;
Let me toil on till life's journey is done if for Love I my energies waste.

All that I have and the all that is mine in the years that are destined to be,
Laurels and Fame, be they mine, I will name as a tribute I yield, Love, to thee;
All that the gods in indulgence may give, and the guerdon which merit may gain—
Nought I refuse of the all that accrues from the work of the hand or the brain.

Love is the lamp that enlightens and guides thro' the gloom when the skies are o'ercast;
Love will befriend to the bitterest end, and will all other virtues outlast;
Love will instruct me to live as I ought, and will shrive of the sins I confess;
Then will sustain when the powers of life wane, and when dying will comfort and bless.

THE CULT OF THE POPPY

(*Written after reading De Quincey's Confessions.*)

THE opium works! I feel its magic spell
Soft stealing on my senses, and a swell
Of rhythmic heart-beats bears my soul afar
Upon a dreamy sea. Across the bar
As with a tide I drift till all the shore
Where I embark'd is visible no more.
Warm languid breezes sing to me and sink
In lulling cadences; while on the brink
Of sleep I hover—flush'd with fearful joys—
And trance-like held in mystic equipoise.
Mine eyelids droop; and sweet forgetfulness
Of time and place, of travail, and the stress
Of life's wild warfare on my spirit falls;
And purple vapors rise in glowing walls
Of opalescent grandeur, in whose shade
The world that is, with all its care, is laid.
Soft music, as from low Eolian lyres
In throbbing unison with unseen quires
Of Seraphim, upon the perfum'd air
Is gently borne; and round me everywhere
Its echoes linger till earth, sky and sea
Vibrate with soporific harmony.

Voluptuous visions luringly arise;
And phantom'd Beauty—which enchanted eyes
Alone dare gaze upon—before me glide:
Fair forms by Fancy and Romance supplied
From an unveiling Wonderland. A joy
Beyond expression, peace without alloy,
A rapture which I almost fear to feel
Possesses me; and makes the hours I steal
From dreary earth-life, with the drug's dread aid,
Experiences of heaven which men have pray'd
To earn and enter; but which can alone
By grace-girt Death and Opium be won.

Aftermath.

Distress'd by demons from the lurid lands
Of a loathsome hell, once more with trembling hands
I lift the smouldering pipe to eager lips;
And wait the working of the charm that grips
My soul and body in imperious power.
It is not now, howe'er, as in that hour
When first I made the drug to my weak will
Enchanter. True, there come the visions still,
And still the magic music do I hear;
But now mine ears are dull, my sight less clear;
My mind to torments turbulent a prey.
The visions fair fast dissipate: the grey
Has long since hid the purple, and the songs
With shrieks and groans are broken. Hideous throngs
Of frenzied freaks the fleeting Beauties press;
And oft I cry aloud with wild distress
At some o'er-fearful form in threatening guise
That fascinates the while it terrifies.

O that I could this baneful bondage break!
That Nature might forgive, and from me take
The penalty she unforgetting gave—
That I might rise and be no longer slave!
Too late! The retribution must be made:
Too long have I deliverance delay'd.
In taking heaven by storm I sink accurst:
O Death, come soon, or madness must come first.

BEFORE AN OLD PORTRAIT

The suns of many summers
  Their changeless course have sped
Since thus thou smil'd, a merry child,
  To maiden pleasures wed;
The light of life's bright morning
  Shone then within thine eyes;
And clouds of care o'ershadowed ne'er
  The lustre of thy skies.

One pleasing panorama
  The world appeared to thee;
All things of earth were springs of mirth,
  And life all liberty.
Thy soul laved in the freshness
  That blew with every wind;
Thy heart was free from love and me,
  And passionless thy mind.

But now maturer fancies
  Engage the passing hour,
The tender bud of womanhood
  Hath blossomed into flower.

Demurer looks—love wistful—
Illuminate thine eyes,
And girlish grace hath yielded place
To grace that dignifies.

I gaze on this sweet picture,
And contemplate with pride
The promise fair of beauty rare
Divinely verified.
A princess here thou smilest,
A queen thou art to-day,
And love confest within thy breast
Is sceptre to thy sway.

Yet oft with waves of sadness
Thy heart now overflows,
For thou hast found that thorns abound
Where blooms love's choicest rose.
And tho' thy soul is often
With strange, wild raptures thrill'd,
These later years have brought thee tears
Which maiden eyes ne'er fill'd.

The life that love hath widen'd
For sorrow widens, too;
The tempests rise most fierce in skies
Most bright with summer's hue.
Great grief is e'er the portion
Of hearts great love have known;
Who dare aspire to steal heaven's fire
Must for the theft atone.

O! Peerless She, whose glories
Inspire these rugged rhymes,
From care set free thou ne'er wilt be
As in those olden times;
Yet love is best forever,
Ah, yes! despite its pains!
The joys of earth have transient worth,
But Love half heaven contains.

TO A FRIEND

When first I clasped your hand I straightway knew
That we had met and walk'd as friends before.
Some unsuspected memory, which Death's door
Had long since clos'd upon and hitherto
Lay waiting wizard-touch, reviv'd anew;
Bridging the silent years that score on score
Lay laps'd 'tween birth and birth; and proving true
The faith within me—or, at least, the more
Confirming it. Be this, tho', as it may
(And to dispute it you the last will be),
This truth remains which none can e'er gainsay:
Not fame, nor gifts, nor gold, nor lordly lands
Can vie with Friendship's tested constancy,
Or match the riches Friend by Friend commands.

MY GARDEN

I LIKE my garden best at night,
When thro' the gently quivering trees—
Rustling responsive to the breeze—
The lone moon sheds her chequer'd light.

I like it best when stillness reigns;
When from the branches overhead
The throstle and the finch have fled,
And only memory hears their strains.

When all the worry, all the care
Of day's vicissitude is o'er;
When from the distant town no more
The traffic's drone disturbs the air.

'Tis then I love to wander round
Its paths with meditative pace;
Where 'neath the trees the moonbeams trace
Fantastic shapes upon the ground.

In those blest hours the thoughts of day,
And Time and Place all disappear;
I roam in an enchanted sphere
And Fancy 'luminates the way.

I people then my garden fair
With lov'd ones who from distance rise,
And from the past: the friends I prize,
Whose lives and loves 'twere joy to share.

They come, these phantoms of the night,
And crowd around me in the dews;
They come, the invited of the Muse,
Resuscitating past delight.

Nor come they silent, but with low
Sweet voices tell of other days
When side by side in far-off ways
We wandered—hearts with hope aglow.

Hopes and ambitions they revive,
Point to the laurels to be won;
They chide me for the little done,
Yet give me strength again to strive.

They sing again the joyous songs
So often sang for our heart's ease.
When days are dark such hours as these
My fancy flies to and prolongs.

The fragrance of the fields one brings,
And tells of sport on mead and mere;
Another with a zeal sincere
Speaks: "Art is long, but Time hath wings."

Here, too, the chosen Three I greet;
And live again the hours when we
Drank deep the wine of poesy,
And brought the bards to judgment-seat.

The Ploughman's songs we read once more;
And, finding music in each note,
The laurell'd Tennyson we quote,
And over our lov'd Browning pore.

The line draws out; and here I see
The friends of darkest doubting days,
The friends who taught me Wisdom's ways
And help'd to many a victory.

. . . . . .

Thus in the perfum'd hours of eve
Oft thro' the sleeping flowers I move;
And, fancy-fann'd, from those I love
Soul-stimulating strength receive.

O blest Imagination wed
With happy Memory! thine aid
Brings friends from far to this still shade
And breathes new life e'en to the dead.

Chelmsford, Eng., 1900.

NIGHT AND THE MORNING

I.—Out of the Night.

Alone

I sit: the smoke from mine enchanted pipe
Curls up in random ringlets, each the frame
Of thy fair face by fancy miniatur'd.
The house is still; and, save the dismal wind
That wails a monody thro' neighboring trees,
No other sound breaks in to interpose
The blest quiescence of my reverie.
"No other sound," I said; yet as the saints
In moments of divinest ecstasy
Have heard some rapturous fragments of the songs
The angels sing, so hear I now thy voice.
Dear soft, sad voice! How oft is tremulous tones,
Inspir'd by those sweet sorrows which thy heart
Doth hold in almost duplicate with mine,
Have echo'd thro' the cloisters of my soul—
Uplifting me—and for a transient space
Resuscitating all the darling hopes
Of days long dead, ere yet had Fate despoil'd
The idols I once lov'd and made mine own.

Dear voice! dear eyes! ah, those rare-radiant eyes!
Their burning beams have ofttimes pierc'd my dark
Like sunbeams straying in the silent aisles
Of some dead Faith—some deep cathedral gloom.
You move me as no woman did before:
Your heart strikes chords responding to mine own;
And in the fitful harmony I hear
(Or seem to hear) some far-borne echoings
Of half-remembered music—phantom sounds
Defying all defining—echoings,
It may be, of the symphonies that swell
Thro' sun-tipp'd heights where stand the courts of Lo
We two are lonely—lonely in a land
Where hateful crowds forever come and go;
Where hearts seem out of tune; where every eye
That turns to look on us leers mockingly;
Where nothing is, and all things seem to be.
Yes! it is loneliness indeed to feel
Exotic spirits on this sunless shore—
By all misunderstood and only part
The other understanding. Yet be strong;
And let me take thy hand. Perchance it be
That in the night which blackens out our sky
Some star may shine which shall heaven's presence
prove—
Some god-fixed beacon whose refulgent rays
Shall cheer our hearts and guide us thro' the gloom
Perchance it be (for Hope still leads the quest)
That with thy hand in mine the rosy shafts
Of Love's bright morning may upon us gleam—
Who knows? . . . . . .
The darkest hour doth e'er prelude the dawn!

II.—L'Entracte.

How went that act? Methought it over-long
And strangely wearisome. The parts we play'd
(Oft play'd before with confidence and ease)
Seem'd all too light for heavy hearts like ours.
I know the play must on; the prompter's voice
Too soon indeed will call us to the stage
To speak our lines, and with accustom'd art
Make false seem true and truth seem falsity.
Yet, while the lights are low, draw near awhile;
Sit here—take off thy mask. I'll doff my robe
Of hateful motley—throw aside these bells—
Dismiss the acted past, and, flush'd with faith,
Will stake my future on the instant Now.
See—now we are ourselves—alone, unseen;
Give me thy hand and look into mine eyes,
Weigh well my lightest word, for from this hour
The future radiates, and moments now
Are big with destiny. Light of my soul!
In honor's name and virtue's (which are thine!)
I offer thee a love too long restrain'd,
Too long, long held in leashes; silent long,
Yet growing fairer with each silent hour,
Like a flower that blooms in wooded solitude.
Speech is too impotent this love to tell,
Words are not coin'd that can its depths define;
I can but lisp it haltingly, and trust
To thy sweet understanding. Yet, dear heart,
Lest some faint doubt should linger in thy soul
(Which from the darkness sprang to light with mine),
This truth rehearse—that love from passion purg'd,
Whose king is Mind, whose enemy Desire,

Is all too noble to be bound by chains
Of time and circumstance. Believe this true,
That all my dreams are realized in thee,
That thou alone canst turn to day my night,
That thou alone canst crown my hopes with joy,
My faith with certitude. Light of my soul,
The die is yours to cast! Full ripe grows now
The fruit of our past Karma; pluck or leave;
Love teaches me to trust you utterly.

. . . . . .

You whisper hope! The vista of the years
Glows rosily, and ends in blazing light!
Now to the stage again, to win fresh cheers—
I'll play with new-found confidence to-night.

III.—Awakening.

Our words became less frequent, till at last
All speech was useless. Motionless you stood
Before me; thrall'd me with a look that pass'd
Like lightning through my soul and stirr'd the bloo
Till every fibre of my being thrill'd
With wakening tremors. Then, somehow, it seem'd
As though the rippling of the brook was still'd,
As though the moon with softer radiance beam'd,
As though a sudden silence held the earth
Expectant, while the arching heavens bent near
In seeming benediction. All the dearth
Of loveless years, the want of things held dear,
The fruitless yearnings of a lonely life
Were instantly forgotten; and my hands
Sought yours in gratitude for ended strife.

Words now were wanting; but the mute demands
Love made were answered with a clinging kiss
Wherein souls mingled; and I knew you mine
Forever and forever. The abyss
'Twixt heaven and earth was bridg'd for me, and thine
Angelic presence—radiant as a light
That shineth in the darkness—made all clear
The way of my salvation.
Saints delight
In contemplating joys they find not here;
Their Paradise lies after life is done;
But I—more blest than they—by Love's sweet aid,
Have enter'd mine, and glory's crown have won
In life's high noon-time—even while they pray'd! !

IV.—Sunshine.

Into the deepening darkness of my life
Thy glory casts its piercing ray,
And—like the promises of May,
That throw forgetfulness o'er winter's strife—
The light of love that beam'd
Into my yearning heart from out thine own
My happiness redeem'd,
And thro' the yielding clouds there brightly shone
The summer's sun.

Naught have I crav'd of wealth or men's regard,
Nor hath ambition sear'd my heart,
I sought of life the better part—
Ask'd but for love, and hop'd but love's reward.
Yet, phantom-like and fair,

Love all-alluring, e'er delusive seem'd;
Unheeded was my prayer,
No ray of hope across my pathway gleam'd
From cloud-hid sun.

But on a sudden thro' the gathering gloom
In glowing radiance thou appear'd;
Entranc'd I gaz'd—yet almost fear'd
To trust what might prove hope's recurring doom.
Still, spite of fear, I leapt,
And at thy bosom found my heart's desire;
For very joy I wept
As o'er my soul there shone with rays of fire
Love's golden sun!

V.—Assurance.

Once was a time—the while our love was new,
When earth seem'd dreamland, and each breath I drew
Was drawn half timorous lest its violence prove
The dread awakening from a dream of love—
Like some grim spectre haunting me by night,
And like some shapeless shadow which the light
Of morning darken'd, came to me the thought
That I might live to lose the love that brought
To life completeness and to earth a heaven.
I did not doubt the love so sweetly given,
Nor deem you even faintly insincere;
Still, spite of all you pledg'd, there rose the fear
That on some sunless someday I should learn
You lov'd me, dear, no longer; and would turn
Your eyes from me as from unworthiness.
Forgive the doubtings which I now confess;

Blame not faintheartedness, but rather prize
The fervent love that could such woes devise.
Did I not love so dearly, doubts like these
Would be like summer clouds, which merest breeze—
Warm-breathing from the south—would soon disperse,
And leave clear sunlight through my universe.
These doubts are gone; the prospect of the years
That wait before me to my sight appears
Endow'd with joyous hope, for there I see
Divine assurance of your constancy.
As I am yours, so you, I know, are mine—
Mine own thro' weal and woe, tho' Fates combine
Against us all our dearest hopes to blight;
Mine own beyond all life, beyond the night
That curtains off life's day, and mine to be
When time shall merge into eternity.

TO WHAT SHALL I THY CHARMS COMPARE?

Dearest, to what shall I thy charms compare?
To some o'er-beauteous morn that brightens eyes
With vigil weary? Dawn so wondrous fair
On earth's horizon never yet did rise
As that which rose with thee in my grey skies.

Shall I compare thee to the summer's dower
Of bloom and fragrance? Blossoms fade away,
And fragrance with them dies. There's not a flower
In all of earth's magnificent display
That rivals thee; thou art more fair than they.

Shall I compare thee to a setting sun,
That gilds with gorgeous glory all the west?
Not till my life's devoted course is run
Will thy sun set; and while with thy love blest,
Glory and light are always manifest.

Shall I compare thee to a song divine
By some sweet singer sung to cheer a heart
Which hath become world-weary? Love like thine
Is sweeter far than music's magic art;
The song must cease—thy love will ne'er depart.

My Muse deserts me, striving to compare
Thy charm, thy love, with aught the world doth prize;
Peerless thou art, with each day grown more fair,
Lov'd more and more with every hour that flies.
How, then, can words thy worth to me apprise?

CLEOPATRA

Gods I defy! the laws and punishments of man
I laugh to scorn! The world's respect or calumny
Weigh lightly with me; and I dare to mock the ban
By cold-soul'd Prudence set on love of such degree
As that which fires and feeds our erstwhile starving
hearts.
Give me that kiss again: that kiss which first imparts
New life to me and then absorbs it till I fall
All powerless on your bosom, trembling thro' and thro'
As with expiring ecstasies. All, Roman, all
I am or have or ever hoped for (save but you)
I willingly surrender. Kiss me, nor yet refrain:
Lo! yielding all, the all of life I gain!

SONG OF THE SNOW

Light as the down on the white swan's breast—
Light as lies gull on a wave at rest—
Light as a cloud on a mountain's crest—
On the earth lies the beautiful snow.

Garbing the glebe with an argent sheet—
Glistening gay on the lamp-lit street—
Crispily yielding to silent feet—
Lies the snow—the beautiful snow.

Never a maiden, I boldly declare,
With her ropes of pearls and her jewel'd hair,
And her gown of silk or of satin rare,
Was array'd in a raiment half so fair
As the earth with the beautiful snow.

Sweet are the blossoms and breath of the spring,
Great are the glories the summer days bring,
Autumn's luxuriance others will sing,
But winter, to me, of the annular ring
Is the gem—with its beautiful snow!

LINES WRITTEN IN AN ENGLISH RECREATION GROUND

Call these the Children's Acres! All around
On sun-kist lawns and blossom-border'd ground
The little ones at play
Keep happy holiday.

We watch them at their games and feel their gladness;
Their joy, reflecting, banishes our sadness;
We hear their shouts of glee
And share their gaiety.

No thoughts of toil and care, no weight of sorrow,
No troubled apprehensions of to-morrow,
Their youthful mirth restrains—
Here only pleasure reigns.

Here, too, doth Nature wear a festal cope
Of flaming flowers—a rich kaleidoscope
Of blending greens and blues,
Purples and saffron hues.

The shimmering river 'neath the willow's shade,
As tho' 'twere loth to leave this sylvan glade,
With an unwilling tide
Flows lazily beside.

Ambrosial zephyrs play amongst the trees,
The woodbirds' carol floats on every breeze,
And splendent is the scene
With mingling shade and sheen.

No noise or danger of the busy street
Can reach this calm sequestrated retreat,
And, children, of these meads
You hold the title-deeds!

Yet scarce a charm without you have these bowers.
For you are sweeter far than all the flowers—
More fair than blossoms new
That e'en in Eden grew.

Well spake the sainted Gregory of old
When such as you were in Rome's market sold—
"Angels, not Angles." Yea!
Those words are true to-day.

Dear ones, play on! Enjoy the passing hours;
Heed not the voices which from neighboring towers
Proclaim the moments flying—
Heed not the blossoms dying:

Too soon the beauty and the dream will fade,
Too soon these lawns will be in shadow laid;
Make most of glad To-day,
Deem youth will last for aye!

CRADLE SONG

Sleep, baby, sleep.
Mother beside thy cot,
Proud in her happy lot,
Her watch will keep.
While o'er thy form so fair—
Guarding with tender care—
Angels my vigil share;
Sleep, baby, sleep.

Rest, baby, rest.
Day now is almost done,
And the departing sun
Sinks to the west.
Gold in the grey sky gleams,
Stars with their timorous beams
Light to the Land of Dreams,
Rest, baby, rest.

Sleep, baby, sleep.
Homeward the birds have flown,
Shadows have deeper grown,
Rest, then, and sleep.
Girt with thy mother's love,
Watch'd from the skies above,
Safe as storm-sheltered dove,
Sleep, baby, sleep.

FROM THE WHARF

To R. P. and A. H., Oct., 1903.

Lost in a maze of love-created dreaming
Lonely I stand and see
The fair morn's sunlight on the waters gleaming,
As o'er the Lake the white-wall'd boat is steaming,
Bearing you far from me.

Wider the waste dividing us is growing,
Wider as grows the day;
Full of sad thoughts I watch you southward going,
Wishing you back—yet comforted in knowing
Love links our hearts for aye.

Kinsfolk, farewell! to guardian gods commending
Your lives—close knit with mine—
I homeward turn, a pensive Muse attending,
Yet many a lingering love-glance backward sending
Where eyes responsive shine.

LOVE SONG

My dearest, let me hold your hand,
  And let me look into your eyes,
For all the riches of the land
  And all that of this world we prize
Are to your charms compar'd but dross—
Your love by far outweighs their loss.

And, dearest, to this loyal breast
  Your faultless form let me embrace;
Nor check the kisses fondly prest
  Upon your love-illumin'd face.
Not earth's best gifts, nor heaven's above,
Would I exchange for your dear love.

Yes, dearest, you are better far
  Than lavish wealth or proud renown;
You are my life's resplendent star,
  My hope's security and crown;
My best delight, my jewel rare,
Blest object of my tenderest care!

And, dearest, when this life is o'er,
  And thro' the darkness lies our way,
I'll clasp your hand and ask once more
  Your trust till dawns eternal day.
The life that lies beyond must prove
The consummation of our love.

"THE TIME, THE PLACE, AND THE LOVED ONE"

Once, long ago, dear, while as friends we parted,
Within thine eyes I saw the love-light shine;
I felt its glow, dear, and it straightway started
Fires ne'er since quench'd and passion half-divine.

'Twas but a glance, dear, and a soft word spoken,
Only a hand-clasp, when thou didst depart;
Yet with that glance, dear, self-repose was broken,
And with that hand-clasp all enslav'd my heart.

'Tis strange, yet sweet, dear, that the soul's affection
Can thus be rous'd into tempestuous swirl,
And strange how soon, dear, comes that one's subjection,
Who finds at once the Time, the Place, the Girl.

L'Envoy.

Thee by my side, dear, in the ingle seated,
The "bairns" asleep—dismiss'd the world's wild whirl—
Our daily tasks, dear, once again completed—
I find anew the Time, the Place, the Girl.

"BE NOT DECEIVED"

Be not deceiv'd; this is the truth supreme:
"What ye shall sow ye in like measure reap"—
No more, no less! It is a dangerous dream
Devis'd in ages wrapt in darkness deep
That "death in grace" brings everlasting bliss,
And hell eternal waits a life remiss.

"What ye shall sow ye reap"—the scales are true;
And so much for your so much will they yield.
Attempt no bribe; nor think to e'er undo
The evil done, or cancel sin conceal'd,
Or 'scape the penalty of dire desires
By aught but purging Retribution's fires.

Nor think that in a lifetime you can sow
Good seed sufficient lasting heaven to gain;
Death is but night-time; and the morn will show
New duties, and new conquests to attain.
Yet weary not—you go from height to height;
Be strong and fearless, follow Truth and Right.

The glories of the gods can yours be made,
But by yourselves can these be gain'd alone;
The merits of another will not aid,
Nor sacrificial rites for sin atone.
The Path is strait, yet flowers adorn the way;
And morn breaks brighter there with each new day.

CANADA IS GOOD ENOUGH FOR ME *

A Song.

You may sing about the countries with a European name,
You may praise the picturesqueness of the East;
You may tell of Southern glories, Afric's ancient worth proclaim;
You may even boast of lands I love the least!
You may play upon my sentiment, extol to me the Isle
Which you proudly name the "Mistress of the Sea,"
But I tell you with conviction, and I tell it with a smile,
That young Canada is good enough for me!

Chorus—
Yes, this Canada is good enough for me!
'Tis a land that breeds the stalwart and the free!
And I hold in veneration
This ambitious little nation,
For young Canada is good enough for me!

She may have no conquering army; she may boast no fighting fleet;
She may never rear a Nelson or a Drake;
She may gain no warlike glory, but she'll never be effete—
There's a grander grade of glory she will take!

* Set to music by Alfred J. Rostance, of Toronto.

In the farm and field and market will her victories be won,
And her councils will of peace the councils be;
She's a country with a history auspiciously begun,
And young Canada is good enough for me!
Yes, this Canada, etc.

'Tis a land where Nature hoarded wealth and wonder yet untold
For the Nation which she knew one day would be;
'Tis a land whose choicest riches are the prairie's waving gold,
And the argosies she sends to every sea.
'Tis a land whose aristocracy are tillers of the soil,
And whose rulers from the scourge of sloth are free;
'Tis a land that seeks her heroes in the ranks of those who toil,
And young Canada is good enough for me!
Yes, this Canada, etc.

LÆTI TRIUMPHANTES

The Fall of Pretoria.

Hark to the shouts of gladness!
Hark to the throbbing bells
Pealing delight
With brazen might,
While o'er each vale and plain and height
The song of triumph swells.

Join with the strain your voices,
Make all the welkin ring!
Let the glad sound
Re-echo round,
Let it from heart to heart rebound—
One grand Te Deum sing!

Welcome the hour of triumph!
Welcome the victory won!
Hail with a shout
The foemen's rout!
Breastwork, entrenchment, fort, redoubt,
Are gallantly o'erthrown!

Nor hail alone the conquest
Achiev'd by Britons' might—
Hail the first ray
Of breaking day,
When war shall cease and peace shall sway,
When darkness yields to light!

Near draws the consummation
Of war's distressful strife;
Soon will be o'er
The cannons' roar,
Soon shall we need to mourn no more
The sacrifice of life!

Sing, then, with exultation,
And let the merry bells
Clash with delight,
With brazen might,
While o'er each vale and plain and height
The song triumphant swells!

June 6, 1900.

THE PROCLAMATION

EDWARD VII.

THE herald's voice rang out, "God save the King!"
We heard the shout; and thro' our tears we smil'd.
Strange how our grief with joy was reconcil'd
At that new cry! O Death, where is thy sting?
The Empire liveth still and draws new breath,
Even while shadow'd by thy wings, dark Death!
Tear-stricken souls, ye honor not the Dead*
By weeping and by moaning only. Come,
Fresh courage take! Let not your lips be dumb
To songs of gladness—raise each drooping head;
Uplift your hearts and sing,
"Heaven bless and save the King."
New life, new hopes, new aspirations spring
Within us; and from darkest night
We merge into a morning's light.
Heaven bless'd the Queen: pray now "Heaven bless
the King."

* Queen Victoria.

THE PEACE OF 1902

From Afric's southern shores the message flash'd—
"Peace is proclaim'd!" The spark that raced
Beneath the ocean's breast made haste
The tidings to deliver. Wild waves dash'd

And lash'd the rocks above in frantic glee,
While thro' the blue the sea-winds sang,
And to the skies the echoes rang
In peal on peal of growing ecstasy.

Wildly the glad news broke upon the land,
And strangely thrill'd the hearts that heard;
No sanguine triumph yet had stirr'd
Our race-proud souls with rapture half so grand.

"Peace is proclaimed!" Fast sped the news, and wide
The swelling tide of gladness roll'd;
Tho' yesterday the bells had toll'd
With grief—to-day they palpitate with pride.

The Empire's myriad cities breathe delight,
And juvenescence everywhere
Obtains: Hosannas fill the air,
And pulses quicken, hearts beat fast, and eyes grow bright.

The soldier's mother heard those peace bells ring.
"My boy will soon be home," she cried;
"I'll search no more 'mongst those who died
In terror of the tears his name would bring."

The lonely wife heard, too, that message blest;
O, who can speak the bliss it brings
To her tried heart? With joy she sings,
And proudly clasps *his* children to her breast.

"Peace is proclaim'd!" Father and friend and son
From war's dread strife are freed at last:
No more the battle-bugle's blast
Will sound: the sword is sheath'd, its work is done.

Yet thro' the gladsome tumult breaks the wail
Of widow'd hearts and minds distrest;
"Robb'd of the ones we lov'd the best,
What unto us that mourn can peace avail?"

We hear thy moaning, but, O hearts opprest,
Let sympathy give comfort birth;
The dead died heroes, and their worth
From pole to pole resounds—from East to West!

Their deeds shall be engrav'd upon the scrolls
Of Britain's glory, and each name
Shall live endow'd with deathless fame;
Their memory lov'd while live heroic souls.

EDWARD HANLAN

Died Jan. 4, 1908.

In the world's infancy, when might was right,
And the grim sword was arbiter supreme,
As its chief heroes mankind did esteem
Its warrior-victors, men of martial might,
Its splendid Sauls, and lords of bloody fight.
Laurels and fame were theirs—their deeds the theme
Of song and story which the old would cite
Their children to inspire. We would redeem
This barbarous past; and to such happy end
We seek the victors who on mead and mere
In manly sport did honorably contend,
And hail them heroes worthy gala-day.
Great amongst such was he around whose bier
We sorrowing stand, and sad last homage pay.

CARPE DIEM

Fling your sorrows to the wind!
Brood, and they grow more deep;
Let not grief distress the mind—
Better to work than weep!

Melancholy is Folly's child,
Bred in the mind deform'd,
Foster'd in the heart defiled—
The heart to life ne'er warm'd!

Grief a worm is in the bud
Of life's sun-seeking flower;
Left to thrive, 'twill canker good
With ever-growing power.

Seek the light—the darkness shun!
Heed not the pensive themes!
Turn your hearts toward the sun—
Absorb its blessed beams!

Life is short; then let us seek
Its fulness to enjoy!
Let us frustrate Folly's freak,
And discontent destroy!

SONG

(*Written for music.*)

O LOVE, come love, sighs and tears are folly!
Why should you and I repine?
Brighter skies will never shine,
I am yours and you are mine,
Then, my love, why mope with melancholy?
Love that sulks can breed no hero,
Come and join the gay bolero;
Trip and play,
Make holiday,
Clap the castanets with me and sing alway,

Love is mirth and music, love is laughter,
Love will bless to-day and bless hereafter,
Happy, then, thrice happy are the hearts that love!

Then love, dear love, what's the use of repining?
Let me kiss those tears away,
Take you to my arms and say
"Sweet, I'll love but you for aye"—

Ah, again your eyes with glee are shining!
Now come dance amongst the lightest,
Make of days to-day the brightest,
Scatter care,
And everywhere
Make the welkin ring with songs that scout despair.

Love is mirth and music, love is laughter,
Love will bless to-day and bless hereafter,
Happy, then, thrice happy are the hearts that love!

TO A LADY SIGHING

Why are thy looks of sadness eloquent,
And why have smiles quite vanish'd from thy face?
Thy constant sighings to my heart have sent
A pang of pity which evolves apace
To love-born misery.

Is it that thou hast found some cherish'd friend
Unworthy of a trust thou didst confide?
Is it that broken hopes thy heart doth rend?
Or is that heart a home where doth abide
A love-born misery?

A LAST WORD

He who of Love oft sang, and touch'd his lyre
With fingers tingling with the subtle thrills
Bright eyes create and kisses given inspire,
Who fram'd with faulty words the song that fills
The universe with music deem'd divine,
Still would of Love be minstrel; and each day
Would morning gather'd garlands bring and lay
As gifts of gratitude upon Love's shrine.
The mellowing years have slow'd the pulse of youth,
And eyes reflect less brightly passion's pride;
Yet year on year still clearer glows the truth
That Love is life's chief good and life's best guide.
In joy and sorrow blest alike is he
Who yields to Love a fearless fealty.

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Stanford, Joseph Hunt
Miriam

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